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FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8590
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
CINCPAC
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
USDEL FRANCE
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
COMUSMACV
CDRUSSAG NKP RTAFB
AMCONSUL DANANG
AMCONSUL NHA TRANG
AMCONSUL BIEN HOA
AMCONSUL CAN THO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 SAIGON 4078

E. O. 11652 GDS
TAGS: PINT PINS MILI VS
SUBJECT: CEASEFIRE SITUATION REPORT MARCH 13

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

THIS REPORT SUMMARIZES ALL PERTINENT INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO
THE EMBASSY AS OF 2000 MARCH 13.

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I. ICCS: CUA VIET, AN LOC, DUC PHO INVESTIGATIONS PLANNED.

II. FPJMC: GVN/ PRG- NVA PW RELEASES.

III. SHARP' S VISIT OFFICIALLY ANNOUNCED BY GVN.

IV. VIET- NAM PRESS CHARGES 6860 COMMUNIST CEASEFIRE VIOLATIONS.

V. MR I. QUANG NAM PROVINCE CHIEF' S COMMENTS.

VI. MR 2. PHAN THIET CANDEL COMMENTS.

VII. MR 3. CG HOSTS LUNCHEON FOR ICCS.

VIII. MR 4. MILITARY ACTION HEAVY IN DINH TUONG; OB CONSTRUCTION IN PHONG DINH.

PART I: ICCS

1. THE MARCH 12 ICCS PLENARY AGREED TO CARRY OUT AN INVESTIGATION OF A PRG COMPLAINT ON ALLEGED VIOLATION OF THE AGREEMENT IN THE CUA VIET (QUANG TRI PROVINCE) AREA. AT THE SAME TIME, HOWEVER, IT DECIDED TO MAKE AN INVESTIGATION OF AN EARLY FEBRUARY GVN COMPLAINT OF NVA ATTACKS AGAINST SOUTH VIETNAMESE MARIENES IN THE SAME AREA. THIS INVESTIGATION HAD EARLIER BEEN ABORTED BY MILITARY ACTION IN THE AREA. THE PLENARY ALSO AGREED TO ORDER AN INVESTIGATION IN RESPONSE TO A PRG COMPLAINT THAT THE GVN ATTACKED THE DUC CO AREA IN PLEIKU PROVINCE.

2. THE AN LOC HELICOPTER INCIDENT WAS ALSO DISCUSSED AND IT WAS DECIDED TO MAKE ONE MORE REQUEST TO THE PRG TO ALLOW AN ICCS INVESTIGATING TEAM TO GO TO THE SITE OF THE SHOOTING. IF THE PRG DOES NOT AGREE TO THE REQUEST THE PRESENT REPORTOF THE INVEST-

ATION WILL BE SUBMITTED.

3. POLISH DELEGATE MADE A STATEMENT IN REBUTTAL TO CANADIAN AMBASSADOR GAUVIN' S MARCH STTEMENT ON THE KHE SANH NON-INVESTIGATION.

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4. THE ICCS CONVENED AN EXTRADORDINARY PLENARY MEETING ON MARCH 13 AND AGREED TO CONDUCT AN INVESIGATION, AS REQUESTED BY THE FPJMC, OF A PRG COMPLAINT WHICH HELD UP A PRISONER RELEASE IN DUC

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PHO DISTRICT OF QUANG NGAI PROVINCE. HUNGARIAN AND POLISH DELS ASKED THAT THE ICCS REQUEST THAT PRG AND DRV FPJMC LIAISON OFFICERS BE DISPATCHED FROM SAIGON TO ACCOMPANY THE INVESTIGATION SINCE NONE WERE IN THE FPJMC TEAMS IN THE AREA. CANDEL BELIEVES THIS REQUEST WAS REMOVED FROM THE FINAL RESOLUTION.

5. DURING MARCH 13 TALK WITH EMBOFF, CANADIAN GENERAL MCALPINE DISCUSSED ICCS DEPLOYMENTS INTO REMAINING SUB REGIONAL BORDER OBSERVATION AND POINT OF ENTRY SITES. RECCES ARE PLANNED FOR LAO BAO AND XA MAT ON MARCH 15. THE CANADIANS AND INDONESIANS HAVING STAGED THAT THEY WERE READY TO DEPLOY TO HONG NGU, THE HUNGARIANS AND POLES ALSO AGREED ON MAR 13 TO DEPLOY THERE AND THE MOVEMENT IS PLANNED FOR EITHER MARCH 14 OR 15. PROBLEMS REMAIN WITH DEPLOYMENT TO GIO LINH AND AN LOC. THE CANADIANS, AS A MATTER OF TACTICS, ARE AVOIDING PUSHING THE AN LOC DEPLOYMENT BUT THEY EXPECT" VERY SOON" TO DEPLOY TO GIO LINH.

6. THE ICCS SUB REGIONAL TEAM FOR BEN CAT HAS BEEN RESIDENT IN LAM DONG AND COMMUTED TO BEN CAT DAILY. AS THERE HAS BEEN RECENT MILITARY ACTION ON THE ROUTE, THE COMMUTING HAS BEEN LESS REGULAR RECENTLY ALTHOUGH THE CANADIANS ASSURE US THAT IT HAS NOT BEEN SUSPENDED.

7. AT THE ICCS MEETING OF MAR 12 MUCH OF THE TIME WAS CONSUMED ON THE QUESTION OF A DESIGN FOR A MEDAL FOR THE ICCS. THE HIGH POINT THOUGH, CAME IN A DISCUSSION OF POSSIBLE TAX EXEMPTION FOR ICCS CONTRACTORS, AND HOW THIS MIGHT BE WORKED OUT. THE POLES TOOK SHARP EXCEPTION. REASON: ONCE THE PRG TOOK OVER, NO SUCH ARRANGEMENT WOULD BE LEGALLY BINDING ANYWAY.

PART II FPJMC

1. PW STATUS: IN ORDER TO EXPEDITE US POW RELEASE AND FORESTALL THE KINDS OF DELAYS WHICH HAVE CHARACTERIZED PHASES I AND II, THE CHIEF OF THE USDEL ON 12 MAR ANNOUNCED THAT, EFFECTIVE THE PREVIOUS DAY, US TROOP WITHDRAWALS HAD BEEN HALTED. AS OF MAR 11 US AND PW FORCES TOGETHER HAD WITHDRAWN OVER 77 PER CENT OF THEIR FORCES SINCE JANUARY 28. THE USDEL CHIEF ANNOUNCED THAT THERE WOULD BE NO FURTHER PHASE III US WITHDRAWALS UNTIL THE US POWS

DUE FOR RELEASE IN PHASE III HAD BEEN RELEASED. HE ALSO ANNOUNCED THAT US TROOP WITHDRAWALS FOR PHASE IV WILL NOT BEGIN UNTIL THE LIST OF US PW SCHEDULED FOR RELEASE IN PHASE IV, AND THE RELEASE DATE, ARE PROVIDED TO THE USDEL.

2. WHILE PHASE II OF PW RELEASE ON THE VIETNAMESE SIDE HAS IN GENERAL PROCEEDED ACCORDING TO PLAN, THE PREVIOUSLY REPORTED DIFFICULTIES AT DUC PHO AND TAM KY REMAIN AT ISSUE BETWEEN THE

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RVN AND PRG, AND NO RELEASES HAVE TAKEN PLACE AT THOSE SITES.
OTHERWISE THROUGH 1730 HOURS MAR 13 1004 ARVN PWS AND 5595 COMM-
UNIST PWS HAD BEEN RETURNED.
SEVERAL DEVELOPMENTS COMPLICATED THE FINAL RELEASE OF
1200 PRG PWS SCHEDULED FOR TODAY AND 999 WERE TURNED OVER. DUE
TO AIRCRAFT DIFFICULTIES 200 COULD NOT BE RELEASED. MOREOVER AT
LOC NINH, A LENGTHY DELAY ENSUED WHEN ONE PRG RETURNEE SOUTH
TO REMAIN IN RVN AND WAS ASSAULTED BY HIS FELLOW PRISONERS.
ARVN MPS SOUGHT TO INTERVENE BUT WERE ALSO BEATEN.
ULTIMATELY UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH REMAIN UNCLEAR THE PW RE-
TURNED TO THE PRG. TO RETURN TO THE PRG AND WAS ACCEPTED
BY THE GVN AS A RETURNEE.

3. THE PW SUB COMMISSION MET TWICE MAR 13 IN AN ATTEMPT TO
RESOLVE THE REMAINING DIFFICULTIES INVOLVING PHASE II PRISONER
RELEASE, THERE IS AS YET NO INDICATION OR PROGRESS, AND THE RVN
INDICATED AT ITS AFTERNOON BRIEFING THAT THE IMPASSE MIGHT BE
RESOLVED ONLY IF THE PRG SPECIFIED TWO RELEASE SITES OTHER THAN
TAM KY AND DUC PHO.

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

PART III: CANADIAN MINISTER FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS TO VIST SAIGON
GVN OFFICIALLY ANNOUNED MARCH 12 THAT CANADIAN MINISTER FOR EX-
TERNAL AFFAIRS MITCHELL SHARP WILL COME TO VIETNAM MARCH 15 FOR
TWO DAY VISIT. (SITREP MARCH 7 SAIGON 3686).

PART IV: CEASEFIRE VIOLATIONS.
OFFICIAL VIETNAM PRESS (VNP) CGARGD THAT THE COMMUNISTS HAVE
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COMMITTED 6,860 VIOLATIONS OF THE CEASEFIRE UP TO 0600 MARCH 13.
ENEMY CASUALTIES WERE 13,586 KIA AND 202 CIA. FRIENDLY CASUA-
LTIES WERE 2,594 KIA AND 12,3 25 WIA AND 677 MIA. 275 CIV-
ILIANS HAVE BEEN KILLED, 803 INJURED AND 787 ABDUCTED.

PART V: MR 8

1. THERE WERE 59 VIOLATIONS REPORTED INMR I MARCH 12 INCLUDING
42 ATTACKS BY FRE (SEVEN WERE BY 130 MM ARTILLERY). GVN ARTILLERY
EXPENDITURES WERE 5,200 ROUNDS NORTH OF THE HAI VAN PASS; 3,400
SOUTH, REPRESENTING A REDUCTION FROM RECENT DAYS.

2. IN CONVERSATION WITH LIAISON OFFICER MAR 9 QUANG NAM PROVINCE
CHIEF COL. VU TIEN PHUC, EXPRESSED HIS BELIEF THAT COMMUNISTS
HAD ALREADY BEGUN THE POLITICAL STRUGGLE IN QUANG NAM THROUGH
THEIR EFFORTS TO PERSUADE PEOPLE TO RETURN TO UNCULTIVATED RICE
LANDS IN HITHERTO " INSECURE" AREAS. PHUC STATED THAT HIS MOST IMM-
EDIATE TASK IS TO INSTILL A GREATER DEGREE OF EFFICIENCY AND MOT-
IVATION IN THE CIVILIAN PROVINCE ADMINISTRATION. PHUC CRITICIZED
IN PARTICULAR CORRUPTION ON THE PART OF GVN OFFICIALS AND THE LAX
ATTITUDE DISPLAYED BY MANY BUREAUCRATS TOWARD THEIR DUTIES.
(CONGEN COMMENT:
THE PROVINCE CHIEF' S REMAKRS APPEAR TO REFLECT THE GUIDANCE GIVEN
BY PRESIDENT THIEU AT THE MEETING OF PROVINCE CHIEFS AND OTHER
OFFICIALS HELD IN SAIGON MARCH 6.)

3. PHUC ALSO INFORMED LIAISON OFFICER THAT VILLAGE AND HAMLET
ELECTIONS ARE TO BE RESTORED. HE WELCOMED THIS CHANGE. PHUC NOTED

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THAT THE LOCAL POPULACE WAS WELL AWARE THAT CORRUPTION HAD INCREASED WHILE QUALITY OF ADMINISTRATION HAD DECREASED FOLLOWING THE REPLACEMENT OF LOCAL OFFICIALS UNDER DL 120. (LIAISON OFFICER COMMENT:
COL. PHUC' S PREDECESSOR, COL. LE TRI TIN, HAD MADE WIDE USE OF HIS REPLACEMENT POWERS UNDER DL 120. THIS COINCIDED WITH HIS AGGRESSIVE EFFORTS TO EXPAND THE DEMOCRACY PARTY IN QUANG NAM. COL. PHUC APPEARS UNIMPRESSED WITH THE QUALITY OF THE LOCAL OFFICIALS APPOINTED UNDER DL 120, MANY OF WHOM NOW HAVE POLITICAL CONNECTIONS WITH THE DP. COL. PHUC HAS STATED BLUNTLY ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS THAT HE IS NOT INTERESTED IN POLITICS. ON THE SURFACE AT LEAST THERE APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN LITTLE ACTIVITY AND EVEN LESS SENSEOF DIRECTION WITHIN THE QUANG NAM DP SINCE COL. PHUC REPLAC-LED COL. TIN IN DECEMBER 1972 END COMMENT.)
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4. OVER THE WEEKEND, THE GVN REMOVED A SUBSTANTIAL SUBSIDY ON SHIPMENTS OF RICE FROM THE DELTA TO CENTRAL VIETNAM. THIS DEVELOP MENT HAS ALREADY CAUSED AN INCREASE IN THE PRICE OF RICE IN DA-NANG OVER THE PAST FOUR DAYS. PRICES OF OTHER ITEMS WILL QUICKLY FOLLOWS THIS RISE. SUCH AN INCREASE IN THE COST OF LIVING COULD HAVE UNSETTLING POLITICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS.

PART VI: MR 2

1. COL. CAMPBELL, CHIEF CANDEL IN TRUCE REGION IV, TOLD PHAN TH-IET POLOFF MAR 11 THAT HE THINKS IT WILL BE DIFFICULT FOR VIETNAMESE PARTIES T
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AMCONSUL NHA TRNAG
AMCONSUL BIEN HOA
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PART VII MR 3

1. LTG. NGUYEN VAN MINH, MR 3 CG, HOSTED A LUNCHEON YESTERDAY FOR REGION V ICCS MEMBERS. ENTIRE AFFAIR WAS HELD IN ATMOSPHERE OF CORDIALITY, AND MINH CHARMED GUESTS FROM THE OUTSET. THE REGIONAL CHAIRMAN THIS WEEK, COLONEL SUBJARTO (INDODEL), READ PRPPARED SPEECH, THE GIST OF WHICH WAS DESIRE OF THE ICCS TO BE COOPERATIVE. MINH DID NOT MISS THE OPPORTUNITY TO REPLY. MINH SAID HE HOPED THE NEXT TIME THEY GOT TOGETHER PEACE WOULD PREVAI
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IN HIS COUNTRY.

2. THE POLISH AND HUNGARIAN MEMBERS WITH WHOM THE CONGEN SPOKE BEFORE AND AFTER THE LUNCHEON SANG MINH' S PRAISES.

3. IN RESPONSE TO MINH' S DIRECTION, LONG KHANH PROVINCE CHIEF COL. MACH VAN TRUONG HAS ADOPTED A MORE FRIENDLY ATTITUDE TOWARD THE XUAN LOC ICCS TEAM. HE ORDERED HIS PROVINCE OFFICIALS TO TREAT THE ICCS WELL AND TO INVITE THE ICCS TO THE VILLAGES TO SEE THAT THEY ARE UNDER GVN CONTROL. THE HUNGARIAN XUAN LOC SUB-REGIONAL TEAM CHAIRMAN THIS WEEK TOLD CONGEN THAT HE BELIEVES THE CUTTING OF ICCS PHONE LINES IN XUAN LOC (STILL OUT) WAS A BUREAUCRATIC SNAFU AND NOT A DELIBERATE ATTEMPT BY THE GVN TO HINDER ICCS OPERATIONS.

4. NOTHING HAS BEEN HEARD FROM ANY ELEMENT OF THE RVN POPULAR FRONT IN BIEN HOA SINCE THE INAUGURATION OF THE PROVINCE AND VILLAGE PRESIDIA EARLIER THIS MONTH, STRENGTHENING

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THE SUSPICIONS OF SOME OBSERVERS THAT THE INAUGURATIONS WERE THE WHOLE PURPOSE AND LAST ACT OF THE FRONT. HOWEVER, POLITICAL STRUGGLE COMMITTEES AT DISTRICT LEVEL CONTINUE TO VISIT VILLAGES AND SCHOOLS TO EXPLAIN THE RVN POSITION ON THE PARIS AGREEMENT.

5. CONGEN TURNED UP WHAT MAY BE A NEW GVN POLITICAL ACTIVITY WHEN NHON TRACH DISTRICT CIVIL SERVANTS REPORTED THEIR POPULATION WAS 56,000 AND THEIR VOTERS LIST HAS 48,000 NAMES. AFTER OFFERING SEVERAL IMPLAUSIBLE EXPLANATIONS, THE CIVIL SERVANTS ADMITTED THE REAL TOTAL WAS ONLY 38,000 (WHICH STILL SEEMS HIGH), BUT THEY HAD BEEN ORDERED FROM ABOVE TO ADD 10,000 NAMES, APPARENTLY CHILDREN BELOW VOTING AGE.

PART VIII: MR 4

1. MILITARY ACTIVITY CONTINUED TO BE HEAVIEST IN CENTRAL DINH TUONG, WHERE THE MAJORITY OF THE VC/ NVA ATTACKS ARE DIRECTED AGAINST NEWLY CONSTRUCTED OR RECONSTRUCTED RVNAF OUTPOSTS. MR 4 IS REPORTING A GREATLY REDUCED NUMBER OF RVNAF INITIATED " SECURITY OPERATIONS".

2. REGION VII ICCS HAS APPROVED SIX INVESTIGATIONS COMPLETED BY SUB- REGIONAL TEAMS, AND HAS ORDERED THE TEAMS TO SUBMIT INVESTIGATION REPORTS TO REGION HEADQUARTERS.

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3. CONGEN REPORTS RECEIVING INCREASING INDICATIONS THAT THE PRG MAY BE MOVING TO BRING OFFICERS IN TO STAFF ITS FPJMC COMPONENT, AND ASSUME ITS FPJMC RESPONSIBILITIES BEFORE X PLUS 60.

4. GVN OFFICIALS AND RVNAF OFFICERS CONTINUE TO SPECULATE THAT THE VC/ NVA WILL LAUNCH A RENEWED OFFENSIVE BEFORE X PLUS 60. IN VINH LONG THEY DO NOT EXPECT THE ATTACKS TO BE AS HEAVY AS DURING THE SPRING 1972 OFFENSIVE. EXCEPT IN SPECIFIC AREAS-- TRI TON IN CHAU DOC OR HONG NGU AND CAI CAI IN KIEN PHONG-- WHERE THE VC/ NVA MAY TRY TO TAKE AND HOLD STRATEGICALLY VALUABLE TERRITORY, CONGEN CONTINUES TO DISCOUNT GVN SPECULATION THAT VC/ NVA IS PREPARING NEW SPRING OFFENSIVE.

5. GVN OFFICIALS IN SEVERAL DELTA PROVINCES ARE INCREASINGLY SENSITIVE TO THE ADVERSE EFFECT OF NEW TAX MEASURES ON LOCAL PUBLIC OPINION. THEY HAVE LAUNCHED A TAX INFORMATION CAMPAIGN DESIGNED TO EXPLAIN THE USES OF TAXES AND JUSTIFY THEM ON THE BASIS THAT THEY WILL REDUCE GVN DEPENDENCE ON FOREIGN AID. THE LAST POINT STRIKES A POSITIVE NOTE AMONG INFORMED VIETNAMESE. CONGEN NOTES, THE REAL IMPACT OF NEW GVN TAXES IS NOT HEAVY. AN AVERAGE HECTARE OF RICE EARNS AT LEAST VN$1,000,000 A YEAR, WHILE TAXES ONLY CLAIM VN$3-4000. THE C

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ALUE ADDED TAX WHICH
TAKES EFFECT ON APRIL 1, MAY HAVE MORE SERIOUS POLITICAL
EFFECTS. SINCE VIETNAMESE BUSINESSMEN RARELY MAINTAIN
ACCURATE RECORDS AND MAY NOT BE ABLE TO CALCULATE TAX RATES
CORRECTLY , THEY COULD BE SUBJECT TO UNPRINCIPALED HARASSMENT
BY GREEDY OFFICIALS.

6. THE GVN HAS BEGUN CONSTRUCTION ON NEW OUTPOSTS IN INSECURE
AREAS OF PHONG DINH WHERE RVNAF HAS NOT OPERATED WITH ANY
REGULARITY IN THE PAST. THE NEW CONSTRUCTION HAS A
RELATIVELY INSIGNIFICANT EFFECT ON LOCAL SECURITY. IT WILL
PROVIDE ONLY A FACADE OF GVN CONTROL AND PERMIT THE GVN TO
CLAIM THE TERRITORY COVERED AS " CONTESTED". CONGEN FURTHER
UNDERSTANDS OUTPOSTS ARE BEING INCREASED OR REESTABLISHED IN
CHUONG THIEN AND BA XUYEN PROVINCES.

7. THE GVN HAS IMPROVED ITS POSTION IN VINH LONG SINCE THE
CEASEFIRE. THE GVN IS OPERATING VIGOROUS " DEFENSIVE" PATROLS TO
PREVENT ANY VC INCURSIONS, AND IS CONCEDING NO TERRITORY TO ITS
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ENEMY. IT IS ACTING AGGRESSIVELY TO ORGANIZE THE POPULATION FOR
A POLITICAL STRUGGLE AND TO EXPLAIN ITS OWN POSITON. THE
DEMOCRACY PARTY AND PEOPLE' S FRONT HAVE BEEN ORGANIZED DOWN TO
VILLAGE LEVEL. BOTH MILITARILY AND POLITICALLY, THE VC ARE ON
THE DEFENSIVE, HANGING FLAGS IN ISOLATED AREAS AND PROCLAIMING
VICTORY. THEIR MAJOR ACTIVITY PRESENTLY IS TAXATION, WHERE THEY
ARE RELATIVELY EFFECTIVE. THE VC MAY BE CONSERVING THEIR
POLITICAL RESOURCES FOR A FUTURE ELECTION. KNOWLEDGEABLE
VIETNAMESE, HOWEVER, ESTIMATE IN A TWO SIDED ELECTION 60-80 PERCENT
OF VINH LONG' S POPULATION WOULD FOLLOW THE GVN.
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